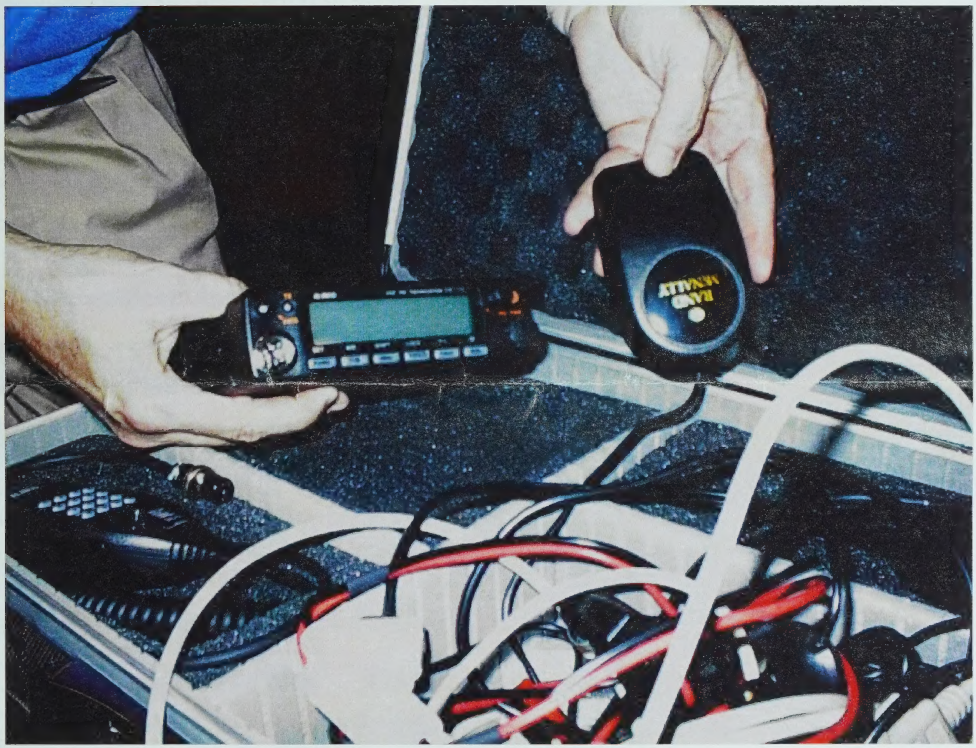
the RARS Exciter

Raleigh Amateur Radio Society

RARS

Worldwide Friendship

October, 2002 Number 379



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SPECIAL SERVICE CLUB

ARRL

The Exciter

The ***Exciter*** is the monthly newsletter of the Raleigh Amateur Radio Society. It is available in both printed and electronic form.
The printed version is mailed to members just before each club meeting. The electronic form, in Adobe Acrobat PDF format, is e-mailed about a week earlier.

We solicit both articles and advertising. The deadline for submissions is first Friday of the month or Friday after the monthly meeting. Contact the Editor.

The views contained in the Exciter are those of the individual authors, and are not necessarily the views of the Editor, or the Raleigh Amateur Radio Society.

The Raleigh Amateur Radio Society

The Raleigh Amateur Radio Society, Inc. (RARS) was founded in 1969 and continues to serve and support the Amateur Radio community in the greater Triangle area. In 1999, we incorporated a new RARS, and obtained 501(c)(3) Non-Profit tax status.

The objectives of the club are to promote worldwide friend-ship through Amateur Radio; to be of public service by
providing radio communications in times of disaster, emergency, or civic need; to educate members in radio technique; and to provide training classes to assist in obtaining Amateur Radio licenses.

Anyone interested in Amateur Radio is eligible to apply for membership. Dues for regular licensed amateurs are $18.00 per year (from July 1 through June 30). Additional immediate family members pay $5.00 each per year. Dues for licensed amateurs older than 59 or younger than 16 are $12.00 per year. Dues for non-licensed Associate members are $9.00 per year.

Applications for membership may be obtained from the treasurer, or the RARS web site (www.rars.org).

Officers

President: **Bernard Blackmon W4BRB**
919-467-8719
bernardb@mindspring.com

Vice-President: **Bob Breyer K1RCB**
919-848-7761
breyer@ix.netcom.com

Secretary: **Jim Walter KG4FIJ**
919-468-5358
jwalter@nc.rr.com

Treasurer: **Greg Seamster KE4PAX**
919-859-0029
ke4pax@arrl.net

Exciter Editor: **Denyse Walter KG4CXR**
919-468-5358
kg4cxr@nc.rr.com

Info

PCRN Sponsored Repeaters:

146.88 Raleigh (ARES/SKYWARN)
145.39 Raleigh (82.5) (Wake ARES)
147.195 Auburn (156.7) (Wake ARES)
147.105 Broadway (82.5) (SKYWARN)
147.135 Chapel Hill (82.5)
145.21 Trenton (SKYWARN)

NEXT RARS MEETING: Tuesday, October 1, 2002

COMING EVENTS

Contact Bill KG4CXY 919-469-0785
or go to www.hampublicservice.org I

The Central Carolina Helping Hams

Leukemia & Lymphoma Society - Light the Night Walks
Event Coordinator: Karl Ulrich K4LNX
Date: Sept. 19 & 21, 2002
Time: 5:30 pm

Duke Liver Half Ironman Triathlon
Coordinator: Eric Haywood KG4CXW
Date: Sept 29, 2002
Time: 7:30am

RALEIGH AMATEUR RADIO SOCIETY MEETINGS

Date: Every first Tues of the Month

Location: Forest Hills Baptist Church, at Dixie Trail and Clark, In Raleigh

Time: 7:30pm, Folks start showing up a bit before 7 to chat, brag and eat donuts.

VE TESTING: The RARS VEs will accept walk-in testing. Please bring a photo ID, your original current license if you have one, and any CSCEs you need for credit.. For more Info, contact Charlie Brown W4VFJ, at 556-8551, or W4VFJ@aol.com

Check into the 8:00 pm net every night on the 146.64 repeater or www.rars.org for information.

Silent key

RARS member John Taylor, K4BEX, passed away Wednesday, August 14, following a heart attack the previous Saturday and a brief stay in the hospital. John had been an active ham in early days of RARS and had recently picked up on it again.

The RARS family offers condolences.

REPEATER CHANGES

Tom Brown, N4TAB ARES EC Wake County, announced that due to the reduced performance of the 145.390 repeater at Lake Wheeler, ARES will also use the 147.195 (+600 156.7 CTCSS) in Auburn as a secondary 2 meter FM repeater for ARES activations and drills. Ken Walker KO4CW has granted permission to use this repeater for ARES operations.

Please make a note of this frequency and program it into your radios.

Watch for Fair Details October 18-26. We'll need about 60 people to help with communications at the Red Cross Center.

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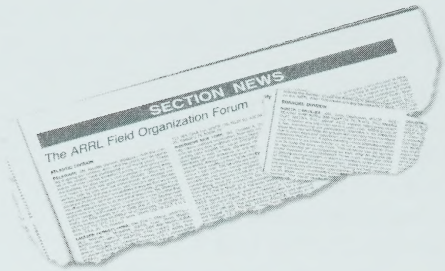


QST "Section News," Contest Scores Move to Web

by Gary Pearce KN4AQ NC Section PIC

If you care about this kind of thing, by now you've probably heard that the ARRL is moving "Section News" from QST to the ARRL web site. It's a decision that isn't sitting well with some hams, but I think it's the right thing to do. Line-scores for contest participants are also going to the web.

If you're not familiar with it, "Section News" is a series of brief columns in small type in the back of QST, written by each Section Manager. (The state of North Carolina is a single ARRL Section, but some states are divided into two, three or more sections.) The Section Manager can write about whatever they want, but they have to keep it short. NC SMs have typically reviewed a bit of the past month's ARRL/ARES activity, mentioned some notable clubs or individuals, and listed traffic counts.

I first heard about the change last January. NC Section Manager John Covington W4CC announced the possibility of a change on the Tar Heel Net (the NC ARES net on 3923 kHz at 7:30 pm each evening) and asked for opinions. About twenty hams on the net registered their opposition, and two or three of us allowed that it might be a good idea. That may be about the percentage I heard when the matter was discussed at ARRL forums and at a few hamfests since then.

The ARRL Board looked at the topic in a meeting last winter, and decided to postpone action. I suspect they saw it as a hot potato they didn't need to get burned by it just then. But the ARRL is having budget problems. A recent ARRL Letter said that "The space freed up by relocating "Section News" will allow more in-depth coverage of general news, public service activities and "how-to" articles." Some hams have wondered if they'll use some of the space to sell more ads. We'll see... but unless you do a lot of counting now, you probably won't be able to tell.

When the issue came up at the summer board meeting, the Directors voted for the change, though it wasn't unanimous. We're in the Roanoke division, and our Director, Dennis Bodson W4PWF, did vote with the majority to make the change.

As I said, I think it's a good idea. In QST, "Section News" is small, hard to read (for my old eyes, and I'm just 52), and outdated by the time the magazine arrives in my mailbox. John has to cram everything he wants to say to NC hams into a very tiny space. No pictures. There's a list of callsigns of Section Appointees, but no info on contacting them. On the web site (which has been in operation since the first of the year), space is nearly unlimited. John can upload information at any time, add pictures, and point people to our own Section web site (www.ncarrl.org) for even more. The address, phone number and e-mail for Section staff are all available. If you're an ARRL member and registered for "Members Only," you get a link to the NC page from the main ARRL web page.

There were some good points raised about keeping things the way they are. The opposition is not all knee-jerk, Luddite anti-technology. People know "Section News" is in the magazine, and when they thumb through the issue, they'll find it. You have to make a conscious decision to look on the web site. There is some archival value to it - you can go back through decades of QSTs (especially if you have the CD collection of all issues) and see a little of what's happened. I'll empathize a little, because I've tried using old Section News columns to glean some history. It's pretty thin. Still, the archival value of the web site is unknown. And you could have both the web and the magazine, with nothing preventing us from putting more on the web that won't fit in the printed column.

But the League says they need the space for news and features. And ads, too, would be OK with me. I've been to HQ, and nobody's getting rich there. The ads keep the League and QST afloat. QST ads aren't like the zillion TV commercials trying to sell me a car I don't want or a purple pill I don't need (but might, if I see many more ads for the purple pill). QST ads are about ham radio stuff. In theory, I'm interested!

There is some kind of anti-web chic going around, as one RARS member puts it, the "internetty-schminternetty." The net seems ubiquitous. It's easy to toss out a web address if someone is looking for information about a topic, and there's no question that a lot gets learned that way. I do have to realize that not everyone lives on it as much as I do. Some people don't have it at all, though the League says they'll be glad to mail them a copy of Section News if they want it. But I'd say we are easily at that crossover point where something like "Section News" needs to go the way of the web for good. And we should put something there that will draw people in, not leave it a backwater web page the way the magazine column was essentially a backwater column.

I imagine Dennis Bodson has been taking some heat over his vote. But he made the right choice.

Minutes of the RARS
July Board Meeting – July 16, 2002

The monthly Board meeting of the Raleigh Amateur Radio Society was held at the Forest Hills Baptist Church on July 17. The meeting was called to order by President Bernard Blackmon W4BRB at 7:40 PM. Members present were: W4BRB, KG4CXR, KG4FIJ, KA2FWC, K4HM, AB4OZ, KE4PAX, KF4UQZ, AC4ZO. The total attendance was 12.

On motion by KA2FWC and second by K4HM, the June 2002 Board Meeting minutes were approved as amended.

Treasurer's Report: Total membership is 333. KE4PAX reported that the rental contract for the Bayleaf tower is up for renewal.

V.P. Report: No Report.

Committee Reports:

FM Committee – KA2FWC gave status of 575 repeater—an audio delay board is on order. W4BRB brought up the issue of wind load on the 64 tower. A new 2-bay dipole antenna will be ordered to fix this problem. AC4ZO reported that he has removed some outdated autodial numbers from the 64 repeater, and revamped the autodial list.

Exciter – KG4CXR had nothing to report.

Net Manager – KF4UQZ had nothing to report.

Web Master – W4BRB (for WA2UZO) reported that web site is running smoothly.

Member Services – KG4CXR had nothing to report.

Hamfest – K4HM reported that financial review of Hamfest should be done by the end of July.

Field Day – W4BRB (for Neal N4HAF) reported that the Field Day was very successful and came in under budget. The log has been submitted.

Public Information – No report.

Education – No report.

VE Team – No report.

Public Service – KG4FIJ reported that the Raleigh Triathlon on July 14 went very well.

Nominating Committee – W4BRB reported that Liz KF4UQZ will resign as Net Manager in September. Based on member recommendations the committee will nominate Mary Holtschneider KG4OQA to the general membership as the new Net Manager. Upon election she will work with Liz and transition into the job by September. Liz plans to continue doing the ARRL news.

W4DW/W4RNC Trustee – AC4ZO reported there were no Official Observer reports from Field Day. Field Day produced more QSL cards than any prior year. W4DW will not be used for the North American QSO Party.

Ad Hoc Committees: None.

Unfinished Business:

AC4ZO will bring the Financial Audit report to the next board meeting.

New Business:

AC4ZO reported that the Traffic Training Program on 64 has been expanded. Messages have increased from 62 to 102

AC4ZO showed the new APRs tracking equipment. He will let Bill Cole KG4CXY of Helping Hams know that we have the equipment available for their use.

There were no announcements or member comments. Adjourned at 8:18 PM.

Respectfully submitted, Jim Walter KG4FIJ, Secretary.

NET REPORTS FOR August 2002

- 8:00PM DAILY: RARS Evening Net
- 9:00PM MON: SWL SIG
- 8:30PM SAT : Tech & Traders net

Total Net Activity:
Minutes: 808
Check-Ins: 428
Traffic : 41 brought 28 passed

2002 RARS BOARD MEMBERS

Starting from the left front:
Frank KA2FWC
Mary KG4OQA
Joe WA2UZO
Alan AB4OZ
Chuck K4HF
Andy NI4S
Jim KG4FIJ
Selene KG4RMT
Hank K4HM
Bob K1RCB
Bernard W4BRB (President)

Nominations Open for RARS 2003 Board

Nominations are open for RARS Officer and Board positions for 2003. Up for election are the Vice-President and Treasurer positions (2-year term) and all Director positions (one-year term). The President and Secretary are in the middle of their two-year terms. The election will be held at the November or December meeting, with the term of office beginning January 1st. If you're interested in serving on the RARS Board or would like to nominate someone, contact Chuck Littlewood K4HF (872-6555 or k4hf@arrl.net).

Most RARS Board positions are attached to specific jobs (Net Manager, Public Service Director, Field Day Chair, etc.), but their are some "at large" Board Positions that let you wield tremendous power without having any specific responsibility!

You may have noticed that we don't conduct much "business" at RARS meetings. That's because most of the business is conducted by the Board. It's not secret - any member is welcome to come to Board meetings and participate. It's just that RARS is a big club, and it would be unwieldy (and probably boring for most members) to try to handle club business among the general membership. So if you're interested in how the club is run, come be "Board" with these movers and shakers on the third Tuesday of each month, 7:30 pm at the Forest Hills Baptist Church. The Board meets in a small meeting room near the main entrance. Call on 146.64 if you need directions.

NET CONTROL MANAGER

Mary KG4OQA was holding the RARS 8:00pm net from the class held this past fall. She will be the new net control manager for RARS. Classes are normally held in the fall for anyone wanting to become a ham operator. Contact Gary KN4AQ (919-380-9944) for upcoming classes. Also watch for information on the RARS website www.rars.org

Photos by Gary KN4AQ

PIGSKIN REVIEW By Dick KD4ISC

What's hotter than Hades, fun and packed with action? The 10th annual Pigskin Preview that was held at Carter-Finley Stadium on Saturday, August 17. This was my second year as event co-coordinator and RARS' own Kelly Andrews, KD4EWG, had invited the ham community to assist with communications for the Preview. Seven local hams provided coverage for this event that raised money for the Triangle Educational Advancement Foundation. Sixteen high school football teams played in groups of four. Each group played a modified game consisting of twenty minutes of scrimmaging, four plays to make touchdowns for points and a kicking contest. Two games were played simultaneously from the forty yard line to goal. A winner from each of the four groups was determined and that team received the Boss Hog Award. These young football players got to experience the excitement of playing in a big stadium with lots of fans, televised replays on the Jumbotron and play coverage and awards presented by local TV sports anchors.

It was a big day (and night) for the hams who worked this event. We provided shadows for the two coordinators, tracked the arrival of teams, monitored the hospitality area, relayed messages to the announcers and Canes Vision / Jumbotron team, monitored the front gate and filled in wherever needed. Radio operators were located from high in the press box to down on the fifty yard line. We had the opportunity to see and experience just about every location at Carter-Finley.

I would like to thank the following hams who put in a long day, endured the heat and thunderstorm and made this a successful public service event: Chuck K4HF, Kelly KD4EWG, Dick KD4ISC, Anne KG4SWF, John KG4SWI and Bill KG4CXY (not shown)

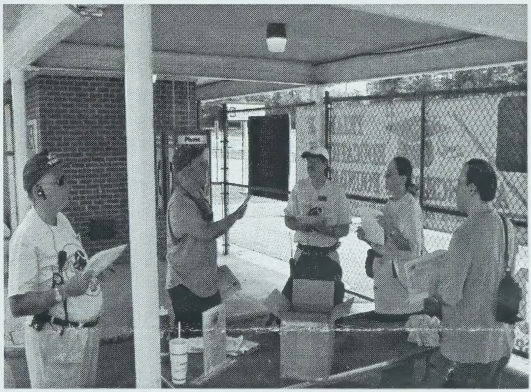


Photo by Bill KG4CXY

Every Wednesday 9:30 145.19

TUNE IN THE RARS NEWS HOUR

- **Newsline**
- **ARRL Audio News**

Sunday Nights following the RARS 8:00 Net on 146.64

SEPTEMBER 2002 RARS GENERAL MEETING

President Bernard Blackmon called the meeting to order at 7:31 PM. Visitors - Rob Parsons (no license yet), and Ken KG4UTQ, who said he's getting back into ham radio after a long absence, and is looking forward to getting his old call back.

Greg Seamster KE4PAX gave the treasurers report. We have 260 members.

Bill Cole KG4CXY, Central Carolina Helping Hams, announced that September is the busiest month for Public Service ever. Among the events, the MS-150 and Duke Ironman Triathlon are on the same weekend, Sept. 14-15. More coming in October, too.

Wake County ARES EC John Guerriero KG4HDT announced that RARS will again help the Red Cross with radio operation at the State Fair - 10 days, 3 shifts per day, Oct. 18-27. Separate training sessions will be offered (and required) for Radio Operators. John also announced that Mark N4MQU is setting up a database on the Wake ARES web site for updated registration. A more formal registration requirement is in place for RACES operation following 9/11. And statewide ARES is getting ready for more digital operation, including a ham station funded by the state for the new NCEM warehouse in Stanley County. Finally - make sure you're by the radio on 9/11/02 for possible activation (and keep your batteries charged).

Gary KN4AQ talked about PCRN, which needs help funding several projects, including a repair to the 145.39 repeater. The club members voted to make a $500 matching grant to PCRN, with donations taken at the October meeting.

Chuck Littlewood K4HF announced that the RARS nominating committee recommends Mary Holtschneider KG4OQA as Net Manager. Mary was elected unanimously. Chuck also announced that the nominating committee (Chuck, Andy NI4S and Hank K4HM) is accepting recommendations for candidates for RARS officers and board (see article in this Exciter).

Bernard recognized Liz KF4UQZ for her contribution as Net Manager for the past year, to a round of applause.

Bernard reviewed the RARS Repeater Group meeting that was held in August, and outlined progress and plans. 444.525 coming first. 145.13 next. Finally a new 146.64 machine. Next Repeater Group meeting Sept. 10 at K1RCB's house.

Danny Musten KD4RAA then gave the program - an update on the IRLP repeater network, which has grown substantially, both locally and worldwide, since our introduction earlier this year.

Prizes: ARRL Wire Antenna Classics, Passport to WorldBand Radio, Repeater Directory. Winners: K4FEP, AB4OZ, W5PGX.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:36 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Gary Pearce KN4AQ, two-time secretary.

RARS / Cary ARC Sponsor Fund Drive for PCRN

By Gary KN4AQ

The Raleigh Amateur Radio Society and the Cary Amateur Radio Club are joining forces to sponsor a membership/fund drive for PCRN, the Piedmont Coastal Repeater Network. Memberships and donations to PCRN will be collected at the October 1st RARS meeting and the September 26th, Cary club meeting. RARS pledges a matching donation of $500 to add to the drive.

The immediate goal is to raise enough money for antenna work needed on the PCRN 145.39 repeater, located near Lake Wheeler in Raleigh. That repeater is the primary Wake County ARES repeater. It provides the widest coverage in the county due to an extremely sensitive receiver and tower mounted pre-amp. The pre-amp has failed, and the estimate for a tower climb (1000 feet) and repair is about $900 (no volunteer tower-climbers need apply unless you have the proper certification, bonding and insurance. If you DO, call Danny K4ITL right away!).

PCRN sponsors several local repeaters, and a linking system that ties repeaters together over a wide area of North Carolina, Virginia and West Virginia. The effort is always expensive, and is funded by membership and individual donations. Their treasury is low, though, due in part to having to replace the 147.105 Broadway repeater that was destroyed when the 1700-foot Broadway tower collapsed after being struck by an airplane last winter. (That repeater was quickly replaced and put back on the air temporarily from one of the WRAL towers near Raleigh. It is now being relocated to a new tower near Lillington).

If you will be at one of the club meetings, plan on making your donation there. If not, you can join/renew/donate by sending a $15 minimum contribution to:

PCRN
P.O. Box 12734
Raleigh, NC 27605

More information on PCRN is available at their web site:
http://www.qsl.net/w4fal/pcrn

TECH/TRADER NET
8:30 PM SATURDAY ON 146. 64
TWO NETS IN ONE!

PRESS RELEASE
News of Interest to Radio Amateurs
Thursday, August 29, 2002

Boston, MA – J. Cunningham & Assoc. announces the launch of a new Website, www.hamtestonline.com, which helps both new and experienced ham radio enthusiasts prepare for U.S. amateur radio written exams. This is the first Website to bring computer-based training (CBT) technology online for the amateur radio tests.

Unlike other test preparation Websites, HamTestOnline takes on the role of your personal trainer. It keeps track in its database of which questions you have seen, which ones you have learned, and which ones you get right and wrong. It asks you questions based on your own personal needs, concentrating on the areas where you are weak. Even if it has been weeks since your last session, HamTestOnline's database remembers your history and continues where you left off.

Other ham test Websites give you questions at random, so you spend too much time answering questions you have already learned, and too little time on your weak areas. With 1,572 questions in the question pools, you can take 100 randomly generated, simulated tests and still not see all the questions!

HamTestOnline does not try to simulate a test. In a simulated test you spend 15 minutes guessing at the answers and learning nothing, and then 2 minutes reviewing your answers and actually learning. Only a small fraction of your time is spent learning! With HamTestOnline, your entire study session is devoted to learning.

HamTestOnline operates entirely online – there is no software to download or install. It is easy to use – one click records your answer, provides feedback, and presents the next question.

The Website includes all questions from the latest Technician, General, and Amateur Extra question pools. The site offers a free trial, which includes 20% of the questions from each question pool. A paid subscription of $19.95 provides access to all questions in all three question pools for a period of 2 years. The site offers a money-back guarantee if you are dissatisfied for any reason.

J. Cunningham & Assoc. is a small software development and consulting firm located on the outskirts of Boston, Massachusetts. They can be contacted via e-mail at webmaster@hamtestonline.com.

Submitted by Joe WA2UZO

Join Us At the RARS Dinner

Every 4th Tuesday, 6:30 pm at Fat Daddy's on Glenwood Ave.

SKYWARN

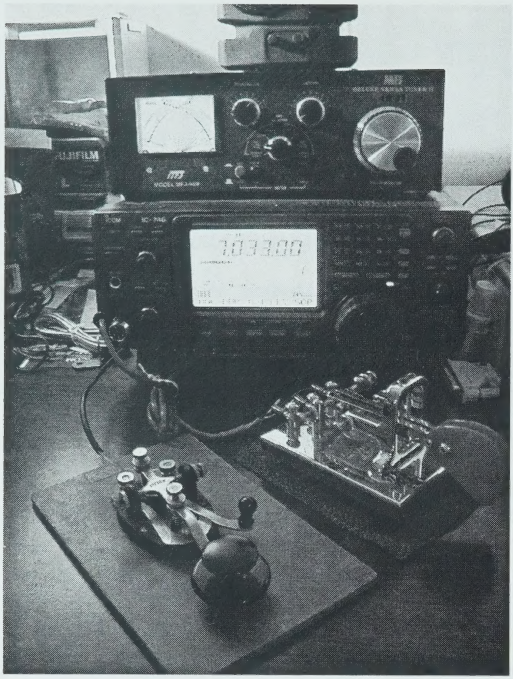
The Central Carolina Skywarn Net Meets Tuesday at 9:15 PM on 146.88 Repeater

Remember to give damage reports AFTER the storms as well as DURING the storms.

HAMFEST CALENDAR

Sept 28-29:	**Virginia Bch VA**
October 5:	**Rock Hill, SC**
October 12:	**Stafford, VA**
October 13:	**Maysville, NC**
October 26:	**Sumter, SC**
November 9:	**Myrtle Bch, SC**
November 17:	**Benson, NC**

Courtesy of the SERA Repeater Journal



Why I like CW

By Bob K4RLC

Ever since I was a small child, the tones of dots and dashes heard on my grandmother's old RCA radio before the news indicated a sense of immediacy and urgency – you knew this was important information – this was important stuff that required attention be paid. For years, I and many others listened to the data stream of Code like it was a magical, faraway language, or music from a forbidden land. Only recently, after much work, practice and help, have I discovered the pleasure of being able to decipher the encoded – underlying – information.

My own journey on this CW road began long ago... When I was a pre-teen, CW took a very special meaning for me. I lost my girlfriend, the prize of the junior high school, to my best friend. My friend/rival just happened to be a ham, with the old novice license. He was a great CW operator, using a Vibroplex bug. He obviously felt badly for stealing my girlfriend, because he gave me his original key - a Speed-X straight key that was old even then. The not unexpected irony in this part of the story: I still have the key, but he doesn't have the girl!

The positives for CW are almost too many to mention... You can do CW with minimal equipment, with primitive transmitters, small batteries, a random length of wire and a paper clip for a key. The old timers will tell you that CW can get through in any situation, despite poor propagation, solar storms, and nuclear haze. In comparison, phone transmissions are less robust: witness my recent problems calling the Field Day 2m net from the back forty near the Shearon Harris smoke stack, running 50 watts to a 5/8 wave antenna, or talking with my wife on the cell phone when the 40CW team was busy racking up points from QSOs. All CW takes is a good ear, one that can filter noise and fill in the blanks when the signals fade in the night. While many say CW is old technology, to me and others, it is and always will be the "original digital."

Many ask what is the best way to learn CW... Not on your own like I did, only having to later unlearn bad habits and re-learn good ones. Fortunately, RARS has phenomenal Elmers like Neal N4HAF and Charlie W4VFJ whose experience and enthusiasm make learning the code almost effortless. However, practice makes perfect. Two ways of learning are most likely to be effective. One strategy is listening to tapes by persons with similar enthusiasm, like the Gordon West tapes. The other strategy is a good computer program that lets you practice character recognition and pushes your speed automatically, toward instant character recognition, as you improve. The best Windows program for this is NuMorse by Tony G4AUD. His shareware is available from his website at www.nu-ware.com. ARRL offers on-the-air practice through WIAW at speeds ranging from 5 to 30 WPM. By sending your copy to them, you can achieve Code Proficiency awards. For those left brain learners out there, there is Bill Pierpoint's encyclopedic CW book: The Art and Skill of Radiotelegraphy. It is a compendium of history, strategies, and exercises on learning and becoming proficient at CW. Bill, N0HFF, is in his 80's and his health is fading, but his book is in its 3rd edition and available at printing cost through FISTS or can be downloaded from the Radio Society of Canada (www.raes.ab.ca).

But how about getting on the air and actually having a CW QSO with someone? Many new CW operator hopefuls will say that everyone is too fast or no one will answer the slow and cautious CQ they send. And there is truth to all of that. But there *is* a group that Elmers new CW ops over the air: it is called FISTS and has the slogan "Accuracy transcends Speed." By sending a CQ over one of the FISTS calling frequencies, almost always someone will answer at your speed and help you have a great success experience that builds confidence. And, as your confidence increases, so will your speed. With increased speed comes more enjoyment and the opportunity for on- the-air contests, known as Sprints. Also, by making 100 CW contacts with other FISTS members, you are eligible for a Century Award. Some of the FISTS calling frequencies are in the old Novice bands, some General. Three of my favorite are 7058, 7118, and 14058. All the information you need is available at their web site www.fists.org (continued on page 11)

The connection is more than just a shared code... In my experience the friendship and respect communicated over CW is as clear or more so than that achieved from phone. CW is a different kind of voice one hears and connects with. I have never met an unfriendly soul over CW. In fact, most CW ops are the most courteous and polite radio ops you'll ever talk with.

The possibilities for operating CW are endless... Enjoy CW at home, in your car, or on a motorcycle or bicycle. Many of you may recall my beach rig on the Atlantic ocean with my wife and kids. Mobile CW on the Interstate is pretty easy, but going down Glenwood to work in the morning is "taking your life in your own hands" according to Max, KO4TV. My latest challenge is using the FT-817 as a pedestrian mobile and being able to walk and do CW at the same time.

So, don't let any excuse keep you from getting on the air... All it takes is desire, practice, and a love for the medium that started ham radio. CW will always be with us, in times of emergency or just plain fun.

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Photo by Andy NI4S

APRS has been growing an interest in the last few years and RARS has bought equipment to use at the many events they do during the year. Thanks to Jeff AC4ZO for putting together a box of equipment consisting of an Alinco mobile radio, cables that will run from a battery or from a cigarette lighter, a GPS tracker which goes in the back window or the dashboard and a small 2 meter antenna.

The kit is easy and quick to setup and can be placed in any vehicle. The favorite vehicles on many events are the doctor and the supply truck. The APRS system can display positions of stations using a laptop with Street Atlas or other APRS software. If any questions on APRS go to www.APRS.org